Welfare schemes for senior citizens

427. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of welfare schemes being implemented for the benefit of senior citizens;

(b) whether any amount has been earmarked in the budget for the welfare of senior citizens;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA): (a) to (c) There are two welfare schemes under which the grant in aid through non-governmental organizations is given for the welfare of older persons.

(i) An Integrated Programme for Older Persons:-Under this scheme this Ministry provides grant in aid/financial assistance to the eligible non-governmental organizations for establishment and maintenance of Old Age Homes, Day Care Centres, Mobile Medicare Units & Non Institutional Service Centres. During the current year 2001-02, against provision of Rs. 13.50 crores, Rs. 11 crores has been utilized so far.

(ii) Assistance to Panchayati Raj Institutions/Voluntary Organizations/ Self Help Groups for Construction of Old Age Homes/Multi Service Centres for Older Persons:- Under this scheme grant in aid is provided to eligible non-governmental organizations for construction of Old Age Home and Multi Service Centres. In 2001-2002, against a provision of Rs. 1.14 crores Rs. 1.12 crores has been utilized so far.

(d) Does not arise.

Guidelines for adoption of children

428. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state the new guidelines to safeguard the interest of adopted children especially by foreigners in view of protests seen at several places against adoption racket going on?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA): Inter-country adoptions are in accordance with the 'Revised Guidelines for Adoption of Indian Children 1995'. The Guidelines are currently under review as part of an ongoing exercise.

New guidelines to safeguard the interests of adopted children

429. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether a demand has been made that Government should stop inter-country adoption of children till new guidelines are formulated to safeguard the interests of adopted children;

(b) whether certain cases have come to light where prospective adoptive parents are having dubious record, all sorts of physical ailments, two or more children, and are divorcee lesbian and overaged; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to ensure that interest of children are protected?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIYA): (a) No request has been received by the Ministry from any State Government or organization to stop inter-country adoption of children.

(b) The Ministry has a letter from the National Commission for Women in which it has referred to allegations that children have been given without verifying the background and financial stability of the persons adopting. The Ministry has also received copy of a letter sent by an NGO to the National Human Rights Commission about alleged unsuitability of some foreign nationals adopting Indian children.

(c) Inter-country adoptions are governed by the Revised Guidelines for Adoption of Indian Children, 1995, which are reviewed from time to time as and when necessary. No direct adoption of children is permitted. Adoption is done through licensed agencies both in country and abroad.